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## Study confirms school libraries have positive relationship to student achievement

When students have routine access to the Internet and can obtain virtually unlimited amounts of information at any time of day or night, are traditional school libraries still needed and still relevant?

The answer is yes, according to a recent study commissioned by state education officials and the Missouri State Library. The study concluded school library media centers and the services they provide can have a significant relationship to students' learning and test scores.

The *Show-Me Connection Study*, involving almost 800 schools, was conducted between October 2002 and January 2004 by an independent research firm, and it echoes similar findings from other states.

"Because of the explosive growth of computer- and Internet-based media, and because libraries are having to compete for funding with all other programs within school districts, we wanted to determine if libraries really contribute to student learning," said Lisa Walters, library media/technology consultant for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education.

"This study found that good school libraries and librarians make a tangible contribution to student learning. Library media centers and their services accounted for up to 11% of the variation in test scores in the schools studied. This is a significant difference," she said.

The study investigated many aspects of library operations and resources, including patterns of library use, staff characteristics, facilities, and the availability of technology. The study identified three elements of library services that have a statistically significant relationship to student learning:

- Student usage of the library
- Summer reading programs (offered directly or with a public library)



**Lisa Walters, DESE library consultant, takes questions at a Show Me Connection presentation in Jefferson City.**

- Library access

During the month of June, Walters, State Librarian Sara Parker, and lead researcher Lisa Whitaker conducted a series of informational meetings across the state for school officials. They presented the detailed findings of the study and discussed ways school library media centers can strengthen and coordinate services.

"We also learned what affects library usage, summer reading, and library access, and we can use these research results to build an action plan, said Parker. "If Missouri schools make good school library media centers a priority, students will achieve more. All librarians and citizens should be part of this effort."

The full study can be found on the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education Web site, at [www.dese.mo.gov](http://www.dese.mo.gov).

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**Matt Blunt**  
Secretary of State

**Sara Parker**  
State Librarian

**Holly Dentner**  
Editor

**Rob Davis**  
Director of Publications

**Julie Stegeman**  
Graphic Designer



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## Blunt expands Bosnian outreach effort

Secretary of State Matt Blunt recently announced an expanded effort to make state government more responsive to more than 30,000 Bosnian immigrants in St. Louis and Missouri. The initiative, which creates dual-language brochures on investment tips and securities law, addresses the fast-growing Bosnian population's interest in small business formation and individual enterprise.

In a news conference at BIH Travel in St. Louis, Blunt and BIH owner Amir Hotich commended Verizon Wireless for special funding it has committed to Bosnian-English information important to investors, small business owners and individuals. Blunt has already produced a Bosnian-English voter's guide in the two-language format.

"I am pleased to extend this important outreach effort to help our Bosnian friends continue to learn about our state and nation," Blunt said. "St. Louis' Bosnian immigrants have worked hard to rejuvenate the Bevo neighborhood and have been successful in creating opportunities for themselves and others."

The Bosnian outreach effort has expanded to include the translated publications "Investment Tips: Don't Lose Your Money to Fraud," "10 Tips for Online Investors," "Complying with Missouri Securities Laws: A Guide for Small Businesses," and a "Brief Look at State Government," containing basic information about the branches of Missouri state government.

Verizon Wireless donated \$40,000 to underwrite the outreach program. The donation serves St. Louis' burgeoning community of Bosnians, most of whom are seeking citizenship, English proficiency, and economic opportunity.

As the nation's largest wireless communications provider, Verizon Wireless has offices and employees in St. Louis, Kansas City, and other communities in Missouri. Blunt praised Verizon Wireless for its interest in the outreach project and good corporate citizenship in helping new residents acclimate themselves to Missouri.



"Verizon Wireless' investment in this project will help my office protect investors and fight securities fraud by getting important contact information to members of the Bosnian community who could become targets for scam artists," Blunt said. "I appreciate their support and assistance in making this project a reality."

## New appointees to Secretary's Council

Secretary of State Matt Blunt has appointed four new members to the Secretary's Council on Library Development. The new members represent various library constituencies and the general public. They include: Sue Wilke, Bonne Terre (representing library trustees); Valarie Darst, Director of Library Services, Kate Stamper Wilhite Library, Moberly Area Community College (representing academic libraries); Peggy Mullaly-Quijas, Assistant Director, Health Sciences Libraries, University of Missouri-Kansas City (representing special libraries); Patricia Morrow, Columbia (representing citizens/Wolfner Library).

The Secretary's Council advises the Secretary of State and the State Librarian on matters relating to Missouri libraries and library service. The council meets quarterly to discuss the use of federal library funds, set policies and guidelines for grants, and recommend programs.

## 2004 legislative session summary

Appropriation levels for the Secretary of State's Office held steady this year as the Missouri legislature wrapped up its 2004 session in May. House Bill 12, which funds the State Library and the Wolfner Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, passed with existing funding amounts intact. State aid, equalization, and the REAL Program will continue at the current level.

Other bills of interest to libraries:

HB 1347 establishes the Secretary's Council on Library Development as a permanent advisor for the State Library. The bill also adapts regulations for the state document depository to include provisions for electronic documents. Governor Bob Holden signed this bill on June 18, 2004.

HB 3, the appropriations bill for higher education, passed with MOBIUS funding remaining at current levels. MOREnet received a \$500,000 reduction in funding.

SB 960 contains modifications for the percentage of property tax collections deposited in county assessment funds. The bill also clarifies Missouri's property assessment law by allowing counties to opt out of certain assessment provisions.

SB 730 creates the Missouri Homestead Preservation Act, enabling senior citizens and disabled persons to obtain tax credits for increases in their property taxes that exceed 5% annually. Political subdivisions would recover lost revenue from the state.

SB 1020 amends the Sunshine Law to increase penalties for violations of the open meetings law. It also sets a maximum charge, 10 cents per page, for providing copies of public records, and adds disclosure requirements for e-mails and other advanced technologies that allow boards and commissions to communicate.

SB 1211 includes provisions that expand the crime of destroying library materials. The bill redefines the term "library" to add museums, repositories of public or institutional records, and archives. The bill also makes it a crime to deface or otherwise alter a library book and creates a Class B

felony if the value of the destroyed or stolen book is greater than \$25,000.

## 2004 Harry S. Truman Book Award

The Harry S. Truman Library Institute for National and International Affairs has selected *Act of Creation: The Founding of the United Nations* (Westview Press, 2003) by Stephen C. Schlesinger as the winner of the 2004 Harry S. Truman Book Award.

The award recognizes the best book published within a two-year period that deals primarily and substantially with some aspect of the history of the United States between April 12, 1945 and January 20, 1953, or with the public career of Harry S. Truman.

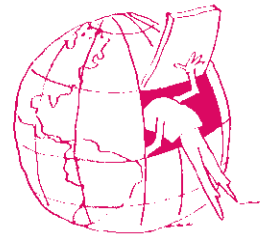
Schlesinger is director of the World Policy Institute at the New School University in New York City. His book was selected from a field of 22 submitted entries.

## Teen Read Week scheduled for October

Public libraries in Missouri are in the midst of their summer reading programs, but it's not too early to begin planning for another youth reading promotion – Teen Read Week, a national literacy initiative, scheduled for October 17-23.

Organized by the Young Adult Library Services Association (a division of ALA), this year's theme focuses on horror, suspense, black and white movies from the '50s, and even modern concepts like genetic engineering. IT'S ALIVE @ your library® offers programming and reading ideas, as well as ways to increase adolescent literacy on the ALA Web site, [www.ala.org/teenread](http://www.ala.org/teenread).

The site contains a section designed to help libraries prepare to celebrate, including a list of articles about horror and links to other Web pages, programming ideas from years past, and ideas specific to this year's theme. Information for librarians celebrating Teen Read Week for the first time is also available.



## Web Watch

### ABA Preview of US Supreme Court Cases

[www.abanet.org/publiced/preview/home.html](http://www.abanet.org/publiced/preview/home.html)

Offered by the American Bar Association, Division for Public Education, the Preview of US Supreme Court Cases Web site includes all the merit briefs filed by parties in every case slated for oral argument. Case summaries highlight court rulings, and the "For the School Community" section contains cases of interest to educators and students.

### Firstgov for Seniors

[www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtml](http://www.firstgov.gov/Topics/Seniors.shtml)

This new site provides easy, one-stop shopping for seniors looking for government information about a number of topics of interest to older Americans. Topics include consumer protection, education, jobs and volunteerism, federal and state agencies, health, laws, retirement, taxes, and travel and leisure.





## Missouri Library News

**newsline** welcomes information for "Missouri Library News" and "Personal Notes" from librarians, library trustees, and others interested in the state's libraries. Send news about library events, projects, awards, and personnel changes to the editor. (See page 2 for contact information.)

### Raytown South Middle School "Salute to Schools" award

Raytown South Middle School has been selected as one of 100 U.S. middle and high schools to receive security technology through the 2004 "Salute to Schools" program.

Sponsored by the American Association of School Librarians and the 3M Company, the Salute to Schools program provides 3M detection systems to help school library media centers reduce the loss of valuable library materials. The recipients of this year's program will receive up to two detection systems for the entrance/exits of their media centers and a supply of the Tattle-Tape™ security strips from 3M for marking printed material. The technology has a value of about \$15,000.

### Wood Place Library passes levy

Library director Lisa Marshall is "just tickled" that Wood Place Library in California is now a tax-supported library. Wood Place had been operating as a privately supported library since the 1950's, and failed twice before to pass a levy. The 10 cent levy passed by California residents on June 8 will ensure the library's future, according to Marshall.

To meet the increasing demand for materials, Marshall can now make plans to expand the large print and audio book collection, which are very popular at the library. The passage of the levy also means the library will qualify for state funding, and a part time employee previously paid with private funds can remain on staff, as that particular endowment funding her salary had ended.

Membership to the library was about 2,000 persons, but has already increased in the few weeks since the election. Marshall and library board members are pleased they

can continue to maintain the services they are proud to offer the residents of California.

### Daniel Boone Library now circulating SLAM art kits

The Daniel Boone Regional Library is now circulating educational art kits as part of a newly formed partnership with the St. Louis Art Museum. As one of four satellite resource centers in Missouri, DBRL now checks out these museum "touch kits" to interested individuals, teachers and groups.

Each kit includes replicas of art objects and artifacts, which can be handled and looked at up close, as well as slide kits, posters, books and either audiocassettes or videos. The kits are available for a three-week checkout period.

The expanded distribution of the museum's resources through community partnerships is intended to strengthen arts education programs, increase awareness of the visual arts, and broaden the audience for the museum's collection. The museum also houses Richardson Memorial Library, the largest public center for the history and documentation of art in the central Midwest.

### St. Charles receives Community Builder Award

As part of its 50th anniversary celebration, the Community Council of St. Charles County honored the St. Charles City-County Library District with a Community Builder award, along with six other local community partners. The Council, a "chamber of commerce" for local nonprofit organizations, honored the library district with the award for providing information, training, and funding resources for the nonprofit community.

### Ray County opens new library building

Residents of Ray County celebrated the opening of their new library on June 21, at a ceremony scheduled 50 years to the date the old library building opened. The new library has approximately 12,000 square feet of space, with a large community room,



**Sedalia Public Library hosts the "After School Cyber Adventure."**

computer training room, and drive-up window.

The project cost \$1.3 million to complete, with funding provided in part from a USDA Rural Development loan. To help keep costs down, library staff members, trustees, and volunteers helped move all the books and furnishings from one library to the other.

## **After school computer program helps children learn and have fun**

Youth at the Sedalia Public Library got a chance to learn new technology skills and express themselves creatively during the library's "After School Cyber Adventure" program. The four-week course offered training in word processing, graphic design, Web design, and Internet safety to fourth and fifth grade children. Parents and children alike praised the program and asked for similar activities in the future.

Sedalia Library provided the programming with funding from the State Library's After School Connections Grant program. The Institute of Museum and Library Services supports the grant program under the provision

of the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA), as administered by the State Library.

The library also used grant funds to purchase two new computers with Internet access in the children's department, which will allow children in the community to do homework and practice technology skills in a safe environment.

## **Jefferson County purchases building for relocation**

A former grocery store will become the Northwest branch and administrative offices for the Jefferson County Library, possibly open by Spring 2005. Board members announced the purchase of the building in High Ridge on April 2, which will offer 31,000 square feet of space. A complete renovation is already in progress.

Construction is also underway for the Fox-Arnold branch, with an anticipated completion at the end of 2004. The branch's current facility is 3,500 square feet and part of the Arnold City Hall; the new branch will be 14,000 square feet and located on the same campus as the new Arnold recreation complex.

## **Online resource for libraries with Spanish-speaking patrons**

PLUS (Public Libraries Using Spanish) is a growing, searchable resource bank that includes Spanish-language versions of common library forms, flyers, and signs, as well as the Dewey Decimal classification system, book summaries, guides to the language and to library Spanish, programming ideas, and more. Found at [www.sol-plus.net/](http://www.sol-plus.net/), the site also contains an electronic newsletter gathering links, questions, and wisdom contributed by over 200 subscribers around the world.



## Personal Notes



### Appointments

**Nathaniel Albers** joined the State Library staff as consultant for technology and census services on June 1, 2004. He will be responsible for managing the State Library's role in the REAL program, the Missouri Census Data Center, and the videoconferencing network.

He most recently worked at the Mid-Missouri Regional Planning Commission in Ashland as a planner and GIS analyst. There he developed hazard mitigation plans, transportation plans, and maps for various projects. He also used census data extensively in preparing reports, grants, and maps for the planning commission.

Albers has a bachelor's degree from Juniata College in Huntingdon, PA, and is completing his master's degree in geography at the University of Missouri – Columbia.

**Brenda Sites** recently joined the State Library staff as consultant for continuing education. She succeeds Patrice Vale, who retired in May after three years with the State Library. Sites will be responsible for assessing the continuing education needs for Missouri library staff, and will plan, organize, and coordinate library-sponsored training events.

Sites previously served as the professional development coordinator for the National Association of Social Workers – Missouri Chapter. She coordinated continuing education events for social workers throughout the state and monitored programs for compliance with professional development standards.

Sites holds a master's degree in social work from the University of Missouri–Columbia and a bachelor's degree in social work from Columbia College.

**Amy Crump** has been hired as the new director of the Marshall Public Library. From Champaign, IL, Crump will serve as director after she completes her studies at the University of Illinois and receives a master's degree in library sciences. Crump has a bachelor's degree from the University of Missouri–Columbia and will begin serving as director in August.

**Joseph H. Green** has left his position as executive director of the Kansas City Public Library system to pursue other opportunities. Green's resignation was effective April 30, a little over a year after taking the job. Board members credit Green with helping the library open its new downtown location in April. Roger Pearson will serve as interim director until the library board can appoint a new director. Pearson has served in three different interim assignments since retiring as director of the Sonoma County Library in California several years ago.

### Retirement

**Mary Alice Tourtillott** retired from the Seneca Public Library on June 5, 2004. Tourtillott served as a librarian for 20 years, and is well-known in the community for her knowledge of Seneca's history.

### Death

**Janice Cox-Proffit**, former director of the Ray County Library in Richmond, died April 21, 2004. Cox-Proffit began at the library as a children's librarian in 1975 and was appointed library director in 1998. When she retired from the library in 2003, she was honored at a special citywide ceremony and an editorial in the *Richmond Daily News* recognized her years of service, noting she "touched the lives of so many throughout the years."

### Award

**Frances Lyle**, staff member of the Henry County Public Library in Clinton, was honored on May 6 as the overall winner of

Missouri's 2004 Older Worker of the Year award. The annual award recognizes the contributions made by older workers and their dependability, loyalty and self-motivation to their job. First Lady Lori Hauser Holden honored Lyle during a recognition luncheon May 6 at the Governor's Mansion in Jefferson City.

For the past five years, Lyle has inspired patrons and fellow colleagues at the library. Her business expertise has helped produce a successful library book sale each year.

Through her efforts, the library has been able to fund a nationally recognized author/story-teller for the past three years. She also writes book reviews for the local newspaper focusing on older titles in the library system.

The annual Older Worker of the Year recognition is sponsored by the Missouri Senior Employment Coordinating Committee, which is comprised of representatives from the Senior Service America, Inc.;



**Frances Lyle, 2004 Missouri Older Worker of the Year, receives congratulations from Secretary of State Matt Blunt.**

AARP Foundation; Experience Works; US Forest Service; Department of Health and Senior Services, Division of Senior Services and Regulation; Department of Labor, Division of Workforce Development; Jewish Vocational Services, and Cardinal Ritter Institute. The overall winner is chosen from among regional finalists, who represent all areas of the state.

## Library tributes to September 11

On Saturday, September 11, 2004, people across the country will come together at public places like local libraries to discuss ideas that matter. Through talks, roundtables, and performances, people will share ideas about democracy, citizenship, and patriotism. Libraries are perfect places for such events: they are free, open to the public, and distributed nationally.

The September Project is a collection of people and organizations devoted to making these events happen annually and internationally, with a focus on libraries.

The project has three main goals: to coordinate with all types of libraries to foster public spaces for citizens to gather; to work with all modes of media to spread the word, and to continue doing so annually on September 11th.

The project coordinators have established a Web site, [www.theseptemberproject.org](http://www.theseptemberproject.org), to provide a space for libraries to let each other know they're participating, and share their ideas. As of early June, over 44 libraries in 18 states had signed up on the Web site, indicating they plan on holding some sort of activity or event on September 11.

## Upcoming Events



### July 2004

Free Comic Book Day, July 3

MOREnet Council Meeting, July 12

Missouri Census Data Center Annual Conference, July 20

Directors of Large Libraries Meeting, July 30

### August 2004

Summer Institute, August 3-6

Wolfner Advisory Council Meeting, August 20

International Federation of Library Associations General Conference, August 22-27



## Spanish language version of “Born to Read” coming soon

The Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC) will use its second Carnegie-Whitney Award to publish the new *Born to Read* brochure in Spanish. *Born to Read* is a literacy project building partnerships between librarians and health care providers to reach out to new and expectant parents, and to help them raise children who are ‘born to read.’

The brochure includes a list of recommended books to share with infants and toddlers, facts on early literacy and brain development, and tips for how and when to share books with babies. Like the English version, the brochure will be available through the ALA Online Store.

The Carnegie-Whitney Awards, administered by ALA’s Publishing Committee, provide grants for the preparation and publication of popular or scholarly reading lists, indexes, and other guides to library resources that are useful to users in all types of libraries.

Bill Erbes, founder of “Libraries Remember,” serves on the national advisory board for the September Project. Erbes is the assistant director of the Bensenville Community Public Library District in Illinois, and he started the annual “Libraries Remember” effort where libraries remain open and do business as usual for the entire 24 hours of September 11. Last year, over 20 libraries remained open 24 hours, including the Linda Hall Library in Kansas City.

Other activities and events can be shared by signing up for the site’s announcement list, where you will receive periodic e-mails detailing the project’s progress and development, plus ideas on ways to get involved.

Thinking about coordinating an event or activity? Here are some ideas:

**Shared readings:** What if everyone read the same text? This year, project supporters are encouraging people across the country to read the Bill of Rights, and to design talks, roundtables, and forums around it.

**Talks:** Invite local and diverse speakers to give talks, followed by a question and answer period. Speakers may be asked to address questions like: “What is the state of democracy in our country?” “What constitutes patriotism today?” and “What can we do to make things better?”

**Programs:** Design children’s and young adult programs geared toward family involvement. Programs can include shared stories, readings, and creative projects. Ask children to imagine and draw what a world at peace might look like. When finished, have each child present their drawing and display them in your library. Ask children to craft their own Kids’ Bill of Rights.

**Roundtables:** Organize roundtable discussions featuring community members with different perspectives. Roundtable participants may include youth, community and cultural organizers, local academics, and media professionals. Roundtable topics can be broad, “Is citizenship local, national, or global?” or more focused, “What is the Patriot Act and how does it affect our civil liberties?”

**Displays:** Design displays and book collections on related topics and place them prominently in the library. For instance, Bastyr University Library will display a collection of books and posters celebrating the Bill of Rights and the Constitution throughout the month of September.

For more information, go to [www.theseptemberproject.org](http://www.theseptemberproject.org).

## New digital library on civil rights movement launched

The Teacher’s Domain Civil Rights Special Collection launched on May 17 in honor of the 50th anniversary of the Supreme Court’s *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling. Produced by WGBH Boston in partnership with the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute of Alabama and the libraries of Washington University in St. Louis, the free multimedia online collection includes dramatic archival news footage, firsthand accounts of civil rights activists, oral histories, and primary source images and documents.

Designed as a resource for classroom use and independent study, the Civil Rights Special Collection gives teachers and independent learners rich digital tools to present this part of the nation’s history in engaging and interactive ways.

Along with the multimedia resources, the collection includes media-rich lesson plans and correlations to standards. To help educators get the most out of the digital library, there are valuable resource management tools for making specific content available to different groups of students.

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) awarded a \$499,133 National Leadership Grant to WGBH and its partners in 2003 for the project. The resulting Civil



Rights Special Collection will continue to expand over time as part of Teacher's Domain, a digital library of multimedia resources for the classroom. Visit the collection at [www.teachersdomain.org/special/civil/](http://www.teachersdomain.org/special/civil/) (free registration required).

## Toolkit available for assisting low-income and new immigrant families

The King County Library System in Washington State has just completed a two-year project connecting low income and new immigrant families with their local libraries, bringing information to these clients about the importance of early literacy activities.

The library system created an online toolkit in conjunction with the effort, which includes a summary of the project, information on providing interpreted story times and purchasing multilingual picture books, outlines for workshops the library presented, and text of their translated brochures in eleven languages. Library and early childhood education staff can review the entire toolkit at [www.kcls.org/clc](http://www.kcls.org/clc).

## Heritage health index survey from IMLS

In July the IMLS-sponsored Heritage Health Index questionnaire will arrive at 16,000 archives, historical societies, libraries, museums, and scientific organizations nationwide. This survey of the condition and preservation needs of collections will, for the first time, produce a national picture of the state of artistic, historic, and scientific collections held by the full range of institutions that care for them.

The Heritage Health Index will provide baseline information needed to guide future preservation planning and programs, target urgent needs for increased funding, and establish a more secure future for the nation's cultural heritage.

The results and recommendations that come out of the Heritage Health Index will

be publicized and distributed widely and given to key national and state policy makers. The data will also give collecting institutions and their leadership a context in which to view their collections' condition and preservation needs.

The questionnaire includes all major issues related to the care of collections, including environmental conditions, preservation activities, preservation staff, preservation budget, and quantity and condition of collections. For updates on the Heritage Health Index, check the Heritage Preservation Web site at [www.heritagepreservation.org](http://www.heritagepreservation.org).

## Missouri literacy assistance available

Looking for resources to help patrons with their children's literacy needs? A free resource is now available for parents to help their children with school, reading, and other literacy issues. Whether they are looking for homework tips or ways to help their children become better readers, parents can go to [www.missouri-pirc.org](http://www.missouri-pirc.org) for a variety of tools.

A service of the Missouri Parent Information and Resource Center (PIRC), the Web site also contains information for parents, teachers, school administrators, and others who want to help children achieve in school.

The Missouri PIRC serves parents, schools, and community organizations throughout the state by providing a wide range of information, training, technical assistance, and resources to help parents promote their children's achievement in school. A collaborative effort of LIFT, the Parents as Teachers National Center, ParentLink, Practical Parenting Partnerships, Missouri's Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, and the St. Louis Public Schools, the Missouri PIRC disseminates parent-related information in all areas of the state. In addition, the Missouri PIRC partners provide intensive services targeted to parents in urban and rural communities in Missouri with children attending low-performing schools.



## Banned Books Week coming in September

To raise censorship awareness, various events, exhibits, and read-outs across the country will be held during Banned Books Week, September 25 through October 2, 2004. "Elect to Read a Banned Book" is the week's theme. Press kits, background statistics, booklists, and other information are available at [www.ala.org](http://www.ala.org).

Banned Books Week is sponsored by the American Booksellers Association, American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, American Library Association, American Society of Journalists and Authors, Association of American Publishers, and the National Association of College Stores.

## 2003 Statistical Abstract for Missouri

The University of Missouri will release the 2003 Statistical Abstract of Missouri (SAM) in August, which contains the latest state and county-level economic and demographic statistics for Missouri. This is the 13th edition of SAM, and statistics cover everything from population, health, and education, to communications, agriculture, and transportation.

SAM is also an excellent source for historical perspective, reporting statistics for ten years along with the most recent data. With all these facts in one location, SAM serves as an excellent reference source for Missouri data.

For the first year, SAM is only available in its entirety as a PDF file found online at <http://econ.missouri.edu/eparc/>. SAM is produced by the Economic and Policy Analysis Research Center, at the University of Missouri—Columbia. For more information, contact the Center at (573) 882-4805 or at [eparc@missouri.edu](mailto:eparc@missouri.edu).

## State launches comprehensive job matching Web site

Finding a career or filling a job opening just got easier with the launch of a new job matching Web site by the Missouri Division of Workforce Development.

The Missouri-based job site, *GreatHires.org*, replaces the former Missouri WORKS! Program. *GreatHires.org* provides easy job matching options for both individuals seeking a career and businesses in search of employees. As before, there is no cost to individuals or businesses that use this system.

The new Web site, which went live June 1, already provides access to 18,000 different businesses with more than 19,000 job openings. There are also more than 250,000 individuals of varying skill and professional levels actively using the system to find employment.

An advanced profiling system showcases the job seeker's experience, education, skills and contact information. A streamlined five-step job posting process saves businesses time and gives candidates quicker access to job openings. The site also automatically

creates a personal homepage for each user, where searches, position descriptions, and contacts with applicants or businesses and Missouri Career Center staff can be stored.

*GreatHires.org* also automatically matches an individual's qualifications with job openings in the database and, through a new messaging system, immediately notifies a business when there is a job/candidate match. The business can then send an instantaneous message to the qualified candidate to which he or she can respond. The site also allows businesses increased control over job matches through new screening options and an automatic ranking system, producing the best-matched applicants first.

State Library staff encourages libraries to let patrons know about the expanded service, and add *GreatHires.org* to their Web site links. Librarians assisting patrons with job services can also direct them to a Missouri Career Center, which are one-stop employment and training centers offering the services of a number of state and local agencies and organizations. Career Center locations can be determined by calling 1-888-728-JOBS (5627) or visiting the *GreatHires.org* Web site.

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## 2004 Letters About Literature award winners

Twelve Missouri students won awards in the 2004 Letters About Literature contest, sponsored by the Missouri Center for the Book, the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress, Target Stores, and the Weekly Reader Corporation.

The annual competition invites students to write a personal letter to an author explaining how his or her work changed their view of the world or themselves. This year, 1,235 Missouri students entered the contest, and entries were divided into three competition levels: Level I (grades four through six); Level II (grades seven and eight); and Level III (grades nine through twelve). A first place, second place, and two honorable mention winners were awarded for each of the three competition levels.

The Letters About Literature contest encourages young readers to explore their personal responses to books and then express those responses in a creative, original way. Readers can select authors from any genre—fiction or nonfiction, contemporary or classic.

Ten-year old Katie Landolt of Carl Junction wrote about the importance of writing down her feelings and expressing herself honestly. Eighth-grader Kathryn Rainey, Kansas City, described the inspiration she gets from reading about strong female characters. And Brett O'Neal, a senior at Nixa High School, wrote about the irony of single-mindedly pursuing success and missing out on the humor and joy of life.

The Missouri winners were honored on April 7 at the Kirkpatrick State Information Center in Jefferson City, where they received certificates and cash prizes for their efforts. First place



**Front Row (l-r): Melanie Blunt, Katie Landolt, Laura Allgood, Haley Stroup, State Librarian Sara Parker; Back Row (l-r): MCB Board President Jamie Spencer, Brett O'Neal, Emma Wan, Kelly Riley, Phoebe Davis, Adam Shelton, Lauren Croll, Cooper Livingston, Anita Sadhu, Kathryn Rainey (Lloyd Grotjan photo)**

winners also received a \$50 Target gift card. Melanie Blunt, wife of Secretary of State Matt Blunt, presented the awards to the students at the ceremony.

The Missouri Center for the Book has sponsored the contest for ten years, and in that time over 11,000 Missouri students have submitted entries. Missouri is consistently among the top states in the nation in number of entries. The winning letters and a group photo have been published on the Missouri Center's Web site, <http://books.missouri.org>. In addition, Target Stores sponsored a full-page advertisement in the April 23 edition of USA Today, featuring the first place winners from every state. A PDF version of the ad can be downloaded from the Missouri Center site.

The complete list of winners is as follows:

#### **LEVEL I WINNERS:**

First Place: Katie Landolt, Carl Junction Intermediate; Second Place: Lauren Croll, Smithton Middle School, Columbia; Honorable Mentions: Laura Allgood, Carl Junction Intermediate; Haley Stroup, Lincoln Intermediate Center, Farmington

#### **LEVEL II WINNERS:**

First Place: Kathryn Rainey, St. Paul Episcopal Day School, Kansas City; Second Place: Emma Wan, West Junior High School, Columbia; Honorable Mentions: Cooper Livingston, Oakland Junior High School, Columbia; Phoebe Davis, North Kirkwood Middle School, Kirkwood

#### **LEVEL III WINNERS:**

First Place: Brett O'Neal, Nixa High School; Second Place: Anita Sadhu, Hickman High School, Columbia; Honorable Mentions: Kelly Riley, Jefferson City High School; Adam Shelton, Harrisonville High School

## **2005 Letters About Literature Contest**

What educational value comes from the Letters About Literature contest? According to National Program Director Catherine Gourley, "Students who read, write better; students who write, read more. Research supports this reading-writing link. LAL challenges students by asking that they write to a particular audience (the author of a book rather than a teacher) with a specific purpose (to explain or describe his or her personal reader response to the work). By encouraging them to *express* rather than *impress*, they develop their natural writing voices and practice important real-world writing skills."

Entry forms for the 2005 contest will be released in August, and the deadline for entries will be December 4, 2004.



## Brochure available for bilingual children who stutter

*Stuttering and the Bilingual Child*, a new publication of the Stuttering Foundation of America, explores the added dimensions of treating a bilingual child who stutters. The brochure addresses how stuttering can affect fluency, including whether or not adding a second or third language to young children can make stuttering more severe. Also included in the brochure are "Ten Tips or Talking with Your Child." A free copy of the brochure can be downloaded at [www.stutteringhelp.org](http://www.stutteringhelp.org), or requested from the foundation at 1-800-992-9392.

## Milestones in Missouri library service

2004 marks the anniversary of a number of Missouri libraries, confirming the ongoing necessity and value of library service in the state. St. Louis Public, Maryville, Washington, Louisiana, and Scenic Regional libraries all recently celebrated significant milestones of service:

- St. Louis Public Library celebrated its 110-year anniversary with a special re-enactment of the first book ever checked out from the library, followed by remarks from local dignitaries and a balloon release at the Central Library location. The celebration also offered birthday cake and free bookmarks to visiting patrons at all library branches, raffles for gift certificates, and other special activities and programming.
- Maryville Public Library celebrates its 100th year in operation this year, and offered special story times, lectures, book sales, and an open house that coincided with National Library Week in April.
- Washington Public Library marked its 80th anniversary with an open house, poetry

readings, and the presentation of the first Velma Jones Stroetker Library Services award, created to honor Washington's head librarian from 1955 to 1981. Jones passed away last fall, but was chosen as the first recipient of the award.

- Louisiana Public Library recognized 100 years of library service with a celebration in May. Although some expansion has taken place over the years, the library remains in its original building, which is on the National Register of Historic Places.
- Scenic Regional Library celebrates its 45th anniversary this year, observing the system's creation when Franklin, Gasconade, and Warren counties joined in 1959. The library marked the occasion by unveiling its new Web site, [www.scenicregional.org/](http://www.scenicregional.org/), which now offers an online catalog, access to library databases, bookmobile and programming schedules, and other library news and information. Sallie Hancox, library director, said unveiling the Web site is "a perfect way to celebrate 45 years of service because it represents a significant change in our library's service to our users – access to reliable information, 24 hours a day, from their homes."

**Missouri State Library**  
**PO Box 387**  
**Jefferson City, MO 65102-0387**

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